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against public ownership as a general proposition. Those who disagree with the conclusions reached will probably be disposed to take a different point of view as to what undertakings are of an "essentially business nature."

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### Labor and Labor Organizations

*History of Labor in the United States.* By JOHN R. COMMONS, DAVID J. SAPOSS, HELEN L. SUMNER, E. B. MITTELMAN, H. E. HOAGLAND, JOHN B. ANDREWS, and SELIG PERLMAN, with an introductory note by HENRY W. FARNAM. (New York: Macmillan Company. 1918. Pp. xxv, 823; xx, 620. \$6.50.)

The publication of these two volumes brings to fruition researches upon which Professor Commons and the members of his seminar at the University of Wisconsin have been engaged for the past twelve years. In 1909-1911, Professor Commons with the cooperation of a number of other scholars published the *Documentary History of American Industrial Society* in eleven volumes, a collection of the more important documents relating to the history of American labor, with accompanying explanatory introductions. The present work traverses much the same ground with the exception that the subjects of slavery and serfdom, to which the first two volumes of the *Documentary History* were largely devoted, are not covered in the *History of Labor*. Frequent references to the *Documentary History* connect the two publications in such a way as to make a single work, the earlier publication serving as a form of documentary appendix.

The treatment adopted is chronological or rather periodic. Each of the six parts thus deals with a single period and each is written by a member of Professor Commons' seminar. Part I, Colonial and Federal Beginnings (to 1827), is by David F. Sapoos; part II, Citizenship (1827-1833), by Helen L. Sumner; part III, Trade Unionism (1833-1839), by Edward B. Mittelman; part IV, Humanitarianism (1840-1860), by Henry E. Hoagland; part V, Nationalisation (1860-1877), by John B. Andrews; part VI, Upheaval and Reorganization (since 1876), by Selig Perlman.

It may be said conservatively that each part presents the most complete and authoritative narrative account available of the period with which it deals. There is hardly an important episode in the history of the labor movement which is not set in a new light. Thus, Mr. Sapoos' chapters on the events from colonial times to 1827 are distinguished by an illuminating account of the

Cordwainers' conspiracy cases. Miss Sumner's history of the period from 1827 to 1837 contains a definitive study of the rise and development of workingmen's parties in New York—a chapter in the history of American labor hitherto only half written. Mr. Mittelman has given us an apparently final account of the development of the City Trades Union in the period from 1833 to 1837. Mr. Hoagland's history of the period from 1840 to 1860 is valuable because of the new light thrown on the early coöperative movement and on the "industrial congresses" of 1845 to 1856. The National Labor Union of 1866-1872 has nowhere else been so capably described as by Mr. Andrews in the section devoted to the period from 1860 to 1877. Finally, Mr. Perlman has included in his history of events since 1876 an account of the Knights of Labor which is not merely the best, but may fairly be said to be the only good account of that highly interesting organization.

The work is more, however, than merely the best available account of the events in the history of the labor movement. Careful attention has been paid throughout to the general economic background and to the labor philosophy of each period. The reader will find admirable summaries of the doctrines of such indigenous labor philosophers as Skidmore and Evans. The sheer joy of discovery has probably led to the magnification of some of these hitherto almost unknown priests of the movement. Ira Steward, for example, bulks somewhat more largely in the *History* than he does in actual influence. Also the relations between the American labor movement and European labor philosophies are carefully worked out. The chapter on Revolutionary Beginnings, for instance, is a contribution not only to the history of American labor but also to the world history of socialism.

It will, perhaps, seem ungrateful when so much has been done to ask more. Professor Commons has a clear right to an honorable discharge from the task at which he has labored so long and so well, but full benefit will not accrue from his work until one more step has been taken. In a brief preface to the first volume, he has outlined what may be styled "the theory of the development of the American labor movement." Undoubtedly the authors of the separate parts have built upon that foundation. Mr. Saposs, for instance, has included in his history of the period to 1827, a detailed statement of Professor Commons' very interesting theory of the development of bargaining classes, copiously fortified by historical material. But in the work as a whole the amount of de-

tail is so great that the theory is not closely knit with the facts. On the other hand, the preface is too compact for the reader to grasp fully the relations of theory and event. A final single volume which would combine the developmental theory with enough of the concrete history to give actuality would fittingly crown the largest and most capably executed piece of investigation in economic history which has been undertaken in our generation.

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*Hours of Work as Related to Output and Health of Workers.*

*Wool Manufacturing.* Research Report Number 12. (Boston: National Industrial Conference Board. December, 1918. Pp. 78. \$1.00.)

"The purpose of the investigation is to establish the facts of this controversial subject and to present such conclusions as are clearly warranted by a scientific analysis of these established facts . . . to assemble the available results of actual experience . . . to determine the effect of reductions in work-hours on output and on health of workers" (p. vii and p. 1).

In the light of their own statement of purpose the authors should be judged. The order of treatment is as follows: (1) The statistical basis of the report; (2) the description of the general features of wool manufacturing, the chief processes and the hours of work; (3) a discussion of the hours and output of different groups of mills, according to hours worked and amount of reduction in hours, the largest group being the 54-hour group, in which there were 68 establishments, of which 55 reported a decreased output under the reduced schedule of working hours; (4) factors bearing on efficiency, such as size of mill, proportion of male workers, character of product, amount of reduction in hours, piece-work and day-work efficiency, speed of machinery, and attitude of workers; (5) actual statistical data as to output, and the difficulty of securing comparable data; (6) conclusions as to output; (7) the factors which affect the health of wool mill workers and conclusions as to the effect of the reduction of hours.

The data upon which the report is based were gathered by schedules of inquiry sent to the members of the National Association of Wool Manufacturers and other manufacturers, and by field investigation. Employers and workers were consulted and working conditions were observed. The *statistical basis* [italics